

ARE YOU IN CHARGE OF YOUR CAREER? OR IS YOUR CAREER IN CHARGE OF YOU?

The working world changes relentlessly. What you did last year won't work this year. To top it off, your boss expects more from you with an added dose of change-embracing elasticity. These are the new rules in the modern working world order. Obey the rules and succeed. Pay no attention to the rules and – well – you know the ending.

For today's executive to prosper in the new manner of working, it takes a fresh outlook. It takes a working mantra of accountability, professional relationships and flexibility. Need a list of what to do? Below, you'll find eight tips to continual improvement and measurable success in your career – now and in the future.

Tip # 1 – Focus on Results

Your company and business pay you to do a job – and to do it well. They expect you to generate results. Procrastination, ineptitude and too much on your personal/professional plate gets in the way and chips away at your performance. Determining your department goals; coordinating them with your company's goals; and, prioritizing your objectives put you on the right path to getting results.

It's valuable to verify what's vital, pressing and gainful about your job. You need to concentrate your activities so that you spend time only on actions that add to your company's goals and your role as a leader. How well you succeed as a leader depends on how well you succeed as a creator of results.

Tip # 2 – Get a Hold of Your Time

Now that you know that only results count, you need to manage your time and resources in a way that guarantees prioritization of tasks and eradication of time-wasters. How well are you spending your time? Do you know how much time you spend on activities each day? Discovering where you use your time reveals your real priorities.

Planning and prioritizing is one matter, but what about the wasted time that soon comes along? Procrastination, interruptions, too much analysis, meetings and a messy desk keep you from managing your time and getting results. Make a point to get rid of the time-wasters than impair your productivity.

Tip # 3 – Communicate With Clarity



You understand the significance of strong communications skills. In a busier world, glitches in communications can set you, and your company, back. With less time to waste and more results to achieve, it's crucial that you:

- Keep others informed, as necessary. Especially when challenges appear.
- Make your responses swift, reasonable and precise.
- Ask for and give immediate feedback.
- Take into account others when communicating. No one likes awkwardness or feeling endangered.

Tip # 4 – Develop Productive Relationships

Say goodbye to the days of merely developing relationships with those who can help you climb the corporate ladder. Today's business expects relationships with customers and a work style built around teams. Partnership and cooperation with customers, peers and higher-ups are of the essence.

For you to succeed, write a list of the 10 most influential people in your professional dealings? Who do you unquestionably need in order to thrive? Bosses, colleagues, mentors, vendors and customers all apply. Your mission is to unearth ways that these people can help you generate more value to your company or business. Equally, each of these 10 people wants the relationship to benefit them, too. Find ways to succeed together. Add more to your list if you see fit.

Tip # 5 – Prepare For Conflict

Put two cats in a room and you'll have a fight. Put three in a room and you'll have a stand-off. More in a room and you might as well leave. Or control the environment.

When it comes to resolving conflict, there is rarely a way to gently ignore, avoid, or erase the challenge and hope it goes away. The head-on assertive method works best. Assertiveness is not hard-hitting or provoking. Assertiveness focuses on issues, effect and solutions.

Not everyone will recognize the value of this straight on approach. However, you will develop a name as someone who confronts challenges without delay, frankly and openly. Problems don't worsen. Relationships stay whole. You get results.

Tip # 6 – Fix the Problem

Today's progressive organization realizes that authority in the ranks – the ability to make decisions – gets things done. It's called a flat organization and it's a good idea. Waiting for license from above ensures red tape, second guessing and too many meetings.



Each year, many authors write many books on decision-making processes. They're good books, too – most of them. Subtract the studies, findings, charts and graphs and you're left with the fundamentals of fixing problems.

- What do you want to occur?
- Ideally, how would you go about fixing the problem?
- What will it cost – dollars, time and opportunity?
- What alternative solutions might work, too? What will they cost?
- Make a decision. See if it works. Move on or try again.

Tip # 7 – Write Your Plans in Pencil

Change: No business article is complete without mentioning that word. In a world without borders, competition – intrastate, interstate, global and Internet – requires that you include stretching and flexibility exercises in addition to your strength training. Why? In an information-based economy, your capacity to change is tested every 18 months. After all, that's the rate at which information doubles and new ways of doing business emerge.

That said, don't cling to the past. Stay informed and aware of the goings-on in your profession, company and industry. Find a way to do your job better. Demonstrate conviction, proficiency and dedication. While you're at it, blaze a path for those you lead to follow.

Tip # 8 – Invest In You, Inc.

As the world turns and your job changes, you must single out the skills, education and competencies necessary to prevail. Sure, your boss can lend a hand through performance reviews, training and ad hoc committee assignments. The answers to the most important questions, though, lie in you.

What do you really want to do? What duties and responsibilities come with your aspirations? Do you need training? Do you have a plan? What can you do today to set off on the passageway of achieving this goal?

Pinpointing your goals and priorities is a huge start. Developing an action plan – one that's updated consistently – gets the ball rolling. Actually beginning, committing, persevering and overcoming prepare you for changes yet to be.

Whether you planned on the change or not.

